

## International House of Pancakes: Stranger Edition by 14winters

**Series:** [Better Than Eggos \[1\]](#)

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Alternate Universe - Modern Setting, El rescues Will from the Upside Down in the very beginning, Fluff, Joyce shelters El, Multi, Nancy and Steve and Jonathan try to save Barb from the Upside Down, Notfic, Polyamory, instead of Barb dying right away

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Dustin Henderson, Eleven, Jane "El" Hopper, Jane Hopper, Jim Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

**Relationships:** Jonathan Byers/Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2018-02-03

**Updated:** 2018-02-03

**Packaged:** 2022-04-20 16:36:21

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,194

**Publisher:** [archiveofourown.org](https://archiveofourown.org)

**Summary:**

A summary of my modern Stranger Things AU in which everything begins in 2016 rather than 1983, put here for reference for future one-shots I will write for the AU.

# International House of Pancakes: Stranger Edition

## Author's Note:

This was originally posted to tumblr, on my Stranger Things sideblog. This meta contains links to three other metas about the fan theory that the Byers' family have supernatural powers, and also a meta post I made about a post s1-AU in which El is able to communicate with Joyce and the party instead of being isolated for months with only Hopper for company.

- It starts in 2016
- Nancy (19 years old instead of 16) works at an IHOP and Jonathan and Steve are college kids vying for her attention, visiting at weird hours of the night just to see her, end up flirting with each other over their fifth cup of coffee while arguing over how big a tip to leave and whether they should risk leaving one phone number or two
- I keep imagining how modern!Steve and modern!Jonathan meet and them arguing about how often the other has been at IHOP the last two weeks (“I’ve seen you here 6 out of the last 8 days Byers” “Is that supposed to make me feel bad? Im not the one who showed up before her shift even started”)
- Nancy still lives at home but hates it, and is saving up to move out. She bikes to her job as a waitress at IHOP, working overnight shifts so she can work a second job at a tattoo parlor as a front desk receptionist during the day. She sleeps between 4:30am and 11am and barely has time off. Steve and Jonathan, two guys going to the community college nearby, start hanging around IHOP during her shifts, and she soon realizes they both have a crush on her.
- they all have crushes on each other and Nancy is the only one who can play it cool *convincingly* while she’s laughing at both boys dancing around each other and refusing to admit they have feelings for each other as well as her and she’s playing matchmaker at the same time she’s trying to drop hints she’s in love with both of them until they have a smack down drag out

session where it ends in the three of them making out over a plate of pancakes and their first kisses are sticky with syrup

- I'll set the scene.
- *SEPTEMBER 2016*: Nancy has invited them both on a lunch date with her, but individually. She took the day off just for the occasion. Of course it's at IHOP, the same one she works at. She doesn't tell them she's meeting both of them until both guys are there. She has the three of them meet in the parking lot, and when Steve and Jonathan see each other, they're both more flustered than angry, and she lays down her feelings for both of them and is like, "If you want to give this a shot, you have to be upfront about your feelings for each other, not just me." POLYAMOROUS SHENANIGANS ENSUE.
- Will and El actually meet because Will gets kidnapped by the evil lab (cuz he, Joyce, and Jonathan all have powers similar to El's but *untapped*) and that's how Hopper busts the cold case on the evil lab wide open.
- El still opens the gate but instead of the party discovering her in the woods, she rescues Will from the Upside Down and the Demogorgon and they escape the lab together.
- Joyce keeps El in hiding and El and Will become really close. Will tells the rest of the party what happened and of course they all swear to keep El and the evil lab secret while they investigate how the Demogorgon is stealing people into the Upside Down.
- Joyce finally confides in Hopper and they find out El's true origins (Terry Ives).
- They still make the sensory deprivation tank to try to find Nancy's friend Barb. Instead of El finding Barb dead, she finds Barb still alive, but barely.
- Instead of Hopper and Joyce going into the Upside Down, and Nancy, Jonathan, and Steve trapping the Demogorgon, it's Nancy and Jonathan and Steve going into the Upside Down to rescue Barb, but they're too late. Hopper and Joyce almost trap the Demogorgon at the middle school but it survives and goes after El, Mike, Dustin, Lucas, and Will.
- After El defeats the Demogorgon and publicly "disappears", Hopper keeps her hidden in his cabin. [For a few months El has to communicate to the party through Morse code](#) (with Hopper serving as middle man) and secret messages until she can write

letters of her own (and send text messages through burner phones sometimes, when Hopper can get them). Nearly a year later the adoption papers come through and she's officially Hopper's daughter.

- Once El starts going to school with the rest of the party, she makes a habit of going to IHOP every Saturday to eat pancakes with Mike while Nancy works the lunch shift. They do their homework in the back of the restaurant, SnapChat with the rest of the party, and Nancy gives them a free dessert or two if they finish their homework before dinnertime.
- In the fall of 2017 when shit with the Upside Down starts again, El, with the help of her aunt and her mother's visions, has finally unearthed information on another child the evil lab kidnapped – Kali Prasad. Hopper forbids her from leaving Hawkins, so El decides to run away to find her “sister”, with only a picture of Kali to guide her, and a burner phone to contact Mike and the rest of the party in case of an emergency.
- After El closes the gate, with Kali's help, Kali stays in Hawkins and Hopper makes arrangements for Kali to “hide in plain sight” under an alias. Nancy helps her get a job at the tattoo parlor, and Kali starts apprenticing to be a tattoo artist. Nancy and Kali fall in love. Kali is completely cool with the polyamory, and she, Steve, Jonathan, and Nancy are all dating. In August 2018 they all plan to move to New York City after Jonathan gets a scholarship to go to NYU.

#### Pros of this Modern AU:

- More time spent on Nancy and Barb, their friendship, Nancy's loss
- Nancy and El forge more of a bond on screen as El helps Nancy find Barb in the Upside Down
- Joyce and El forge more of bond as Joyce shelters El after El has rescued her son from the lab that kidnapped him, as well as saving him from the Demogorgon in the Upside Down
- El and Will forming a deep friendship immediately
- The entire party being together from the beginning
- El staying in contact with her entire found family after she

defeats the Demogorgon, instead of being isolated

- Nancy, Steve, and Jonathan being allowed to form a friendship months before the gate to the Upside Down is opened, making it plausible for them to want to go together into the Upside Down to find Barb
- Hopper and Joyce confronting their feelings for each other while caring for the entire party, especially El and Will, and directly acting to protect the kids from the Demogorgon
- Joyce being the driving force behind protecting El, so El gets to have a *real* parental figure in her life from nearly the moment she escapes the lab
- The party accepting El as one of them from the start because she rescued Will
- Will being the most understanding and insightful on El going nonverbal, unable to communicate clearly, and helping her communicate with the rest of the party, and the adults